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Canada. National design council  
[General publications]  
[G-1] Brief history... 1967.







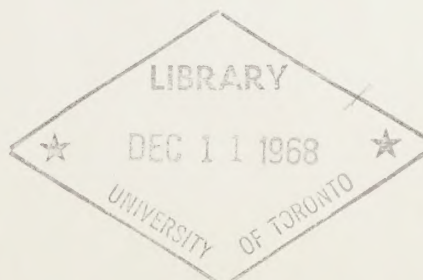
[6-1] A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NATIONAL DESIGN BRANCH AND THE  
NATIONAL DESIGN COUNCIL AND THEIR FUNCTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS

THE NATIONAL DESIGN COUNCIL was established by the National Design Council Act on June 1, 1961. It consists of seventeen members including:

- (a) Five members chosen from the fields of industry, commerce and organized labour;
- (b) Two members from the field of the distribution of goods;
- (c) Four members from any of the fields of architecture, design and engineering;
- (d) Four members who are officers or employees of Departments or Agencies of the Government of Canada having a specialized interest in industrial design; and
- (e) Two members of the general public.

The objects of the Council are to promote and expedite improvement of design in the products of Canadian industry by:

- (a) Planning and implementing programmes to create an awareness by industry and the general public of the need for good design;
- (b) Developing methods of achieving improved design;
- (c) Assisting industry in developing and applying good design techniques;
- (d) Organizing and assisting committees and other groups in the implementation, on a national, regional or industry basis of programmes to foster good design;
- (e) Recommending to the Minister the awarding through appropriate organizations and otherwise of grants and scholarships;
  - (i) to individuals in Canada for study or research in design in Canada or elsewhere; and
  - (ii) to institutions in Canada to encourage study or research in design in Canada;
- (f) Granting or issuing certificates, citations or awards of merit in respect of Canadian products of outstanding design; and
- (g) Arranging for and sponsoring the exhibition of displays of good design in Canada and abroad.







The National Design Council is an advisory group to the federal government but the members of the Council as such are not part of the public service of Canada.

In order to carry out the objectives of the National Design Council, a National Design Branch was created in August, 1961 as part of the Domestic Commerce Branch of the Department of Trade and Commerce. The duties and functions of the Minister of Trade and Commerce relating to the National Design Branch were subsequently transferred to the Minister of Industry in October, 1963. A permanent secretary to the Council and to its committees is an employee of the Department of Industry. The Branch is now known as the Office of the Design Adviser.

The Office of the Design Adviser has two basic areas of responsibility: the first is to administer the National Design Council Act; the second is to service the Departments of Industry and Defence Production and any other federal government department seeking advice on matters pertaining to design.

Arising from the National Design Council's responsibility outlined in the Act, the following form part of a continuing programme in the promotion of Canadian Design:

'Design Canada' Centre: Toronto, and 'Design Canada' Centre: Montreal

To encourage and support the efforts of industry in the introduction of new and improved product designs, a 'Design Canada' Centre was established in Toronto on March 2, 1964 under sponsorship of the National Design Council and the Department of Industry. The success of this service led to the opening of a second Centre in Montreal in September, 1967. The Centres are intended to focus the attention of manufacturers, domestic and foreign buyers, and the general public on the merits of good design through exhibitions of well-designed Canadian products. Products on display at the Centres are changed frequently and a number of feature displays are mounted every year.

Services available at the Centres include a reference library and reading room where interested persons, including students of industrial design, have access to the latest design publications, and a 'Design Canada' Product Index in which Canadian manufactured products of good design are fully described in text and photographs. Facilities are available at the Centres for meetings of designers, product evaluation committees and for small seminars and conferences on design subjects.

Full-time staffs at the Centres arrange tours by local and visiting groups, provide information on products on display and in the Product Index to purchasing agents, foreign buyers, retail buyers, interior design consultants, journalists, tourists and the general public. The staff also assist enquirers to obtain further information from manufacturers and distributors, conduct illustrated programmes on design appreciation for visitors, including adult and school groups, and assist researchers, students and visitors to use the available reference materials.





### 'Design Canada' Product Index

The 'Design Canada' Product Index is an illustrated ready-reference catalogue of Canadian products that meet good design standards. Manufacturers are invited to submit current products to Product Evaluation Committees. These independent adjudicating groups are made up of experts with wide experience in manufacturing, merchandising, industrial design, engineering, architecture and associated fields. Products which meet National Design Council criteria of design and manufacture are entered in the Product Index and may then be included in 'Design Canada' programmes. One of the most important features of the Index is that it is a convenient reference source for purchasing agents, retail buyers, importers and the general public. The Product Index may be consulted at the Office of the Design Adviser in Ottawa or at the 'Design Canada' Centres in Toronto and Montreal. Eventually it may be maintained in major Canadian cities and offices of Canadian Trade Commissioners abroad.

### Exhibits and Displays

In addition to the displays at the Centres; special feature exhibits are mounted across the country at various trade and professional association meetings and conventions, as well as at trade fairs abroad, as part of the Design Canada On The Road programme. Full-scale participation in the 1964 Triennale di Milano culminated in an award for Canada's display and a number of awards for product design excellence.

### 'Design Canada' Scholarships and Grants Program

The National Design Council makes a limited financial provision annually for the awarding of scholarships and grants to individuals and institutions in Canada undertaking study and research in design. Literature and applications are distributed to interested institutions and individuals early in each calendar year, and those whose applications meet specified requirements are approved by a committee of the Council.

### 'Design Canada' Service

#### Reference Service

A comprehensive design library and reference service is maintained at the Office of the Design Advisor and at the 'Design Canada' Centres in Toronto and Montreal for on-the-spot reference by all interested groups and persons. The reference service consists of a wide range of books and periodicals and information on design and related subjects.





## Visual Aids

Promotion of design appreciation is an important part of the continuing programme of the National Design Council, and films, filmstrips, slides, still photography and posters are widely used to illustrate verbal presentations at seminars and conferences and for dissemination to educational institutions and other interested groups.

## Advisory Service

The National Design Council offers on demand as part of the overall programme, design guidance to manufacturers, designers, government agencies and business men, in the areas of environments, products and other facets of the field of industrial design.

## Record of Designers

Information on professional designers and their services across Canada is given to manufacturers on request.

## Other Activities

Design Canada; Better Products for Modern Living:

Special projects to stimulate design improvement in selected product design fields are sponsored periodically and support is given to similar projects carried out by other organizations.

Awards for design excellence in creative use of Steel, Wood and Concrete, in Buildings and Bridges have been conducted in cooperation with industry organizations. An ambitious programme entitled Canadian Design '67 took place in 1966, part of which, Canadian Design '67 Awards, was aimed at the stimulation of product design and manufacture in all products for buildings. From this project emerged a catalogue containing approximately 500 products, judged by independent evaluation committees to be the best in Canadian design. This catalogue has been widely distributed both in Canada and abroad.

## ICSID '67

The fifth general assembly of the International Congress of Societies of Industrial Design was co-sponsored by the National Design Council, the Department of Industry and the Canadian design profession. It brought together the top design authorities in the world for the first time on the North American continent.

Program of human application is an important part of the overall program of the Federal Government, and the Federal Government, through its various agencies, is actively engaged in the development of human resources and the dissemination of educational information and other knowledge.

Executive Order

The Federal Government is committed to the development of human resources and the dissemination of educational information and other knowledge, and it is the policy of the Federal Government to support and encourage the development of human resources and the dissemination of educational information and other knowledge.

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